

Message Text

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21/17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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SP-02 CIEP-02 LAB-03 OMB-01 IGA-01 SS-15 L-02 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0245

UNCLAS CAIRO 9205

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y P A R A 4 L I N E 7

FROM ALEXANDRIA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, EG

SUBJECT: ALEXANDRIA PORT CONGESTION

REF: ALEXANDRIA A-022 AND ALEXANDRIA A-024

1. AS ALEXANDRIA PORT CONGESTION (REPAIRS) NEAR CRISIS PROPORTIONS, GOE HAS FINALLY MOVED. FIRST WINTER RAINS HAVE FALLEN FORTUNATELY SCATTERED AND LIGHT AS BACKLOG OF 160,000 TONS OF UNLOADED CARGO ALMOST PARALYZED PORT AREA, AND OVER 50 VESSELS WAITED AT ANCHOR FOR DOCK SPACE. MUCH OF GOODS LYING IN OPEN IS VULNERABLE WHEAT, FLOUR AND FERTILIZER.

2. GOE HAS ORDERED ARMY TRANSPORTATION CORPS INTO ACTION SETTING TARGET OF MOVING 12,000 TONS A DAY TO TEMPORARY STORAGE AREAS HASTILY ERECTED AT AMARYIA AND SMOUHA AT EDGE OF CITY. STEVADORING PUT ON 3 SHIFTS 24-HR DAY. FIRST DAY'S LIFT ESTIMATED AT 16,500 TONS.

3. BELATED EFFORT IS ONLY PALLIATIVE, HOWEVER, SHIPS OFF-
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SHORE AND ARRIVING DUE TO DEPOSIT 290,000 TONS MORE IN NEXT

20 DAYS. ANTIQUATED PORT FACILITIES, INADEQUATE SPACE, LACK OF SUFFICIENT TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE MEAN PRESENT ALEXANDRIA PORT SIMPLY CANNOT COPE OVER LONG-TERM WITH STEADILY INCREASING EGYPTIAN MARITIME TRADE.

4. PRESENT PROBLEMS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL NEW PORTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR PLANNED AT MERSA MATRUH AND DAMIETTA AND ALEXANDRIA EXTENSION ARE READY SEVERAL YEARS FROM NOW, UNTIL PORT SAID FULLY OPERATIVE AGAIN, AND UNTIL RAILROAD AND WATER TRANSPORT FACILITIES ARE EXPANDED AND MODERNIZED. IN LATTER CONNECTION, HIGH-LEVEL GOE PLANNING OFFICIAL IN ALEXANDRIA TELLS US MAJOR PART OF PROPOSED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR WESTERN DESERT NORTH COAST (STATE 245858 AND CAIRO 9021), AT LEAST IN NEXT YEAR, WILL INVOLVE MERSA MATRUH PORT FOR OCEAN SHIPPING AND ASSOCIATED RAIL, ROAD, ELECTRICITY AND CONNECTIONS NETWORK, WITH INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND TOURIST TRADE SECONDARY CONSIDERATION. SIGNED CHASE
EILTS

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